

ORAL HISTORY COMMITTEE

GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER

THELMA HUNT PH.D., M.D.

JULY 10, 1984

Acc 1054
Box 1

ORAL HISTORY COMMITTEE
GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER

THELMA HUNT, Ph.D, M.D.

Interviewer: James W. Watts, M.D.

Conducted: July 10, 1984

This is the record of an interview with Thelma Hunt, Ph.D., M.D., Chairman of the Department of Psychology at GWU from 1938 to 1963. Dr. Hunt received her B.A., M.A. and Ph.D. in Psychology and her M.D. degree all from George Washington University. The interview recounts her experiences as a student and faculty member. Special attention is paid to her work on the Scholastic Aptitude test for medical school, which was the forerunner of today's Medical College Admission Test (MCAT). Her experiences in medical school, while carrying a full teaching load in the Department of Psychology, and her difficulty in obtaining an internship because she is a woman are discussed. The work she did with Drs. Freeman and Watts, her special interest in psychological testing and her work since retiring from the full-time faculty at GWU are also explored.

This interview is part of a project of the Oral History Committee of the Medical Center. The interviewer is James W. Watts, M.D., Professor Emeritus of Neurological Surgery, GWUMC. The interview was conducted on July 10, 1984.

Oral History Interview with
Dr. Thelma Hunt
Interviewed by Dr. James W. Watts
July 10, 1984

This is an oral history interview with Dr. Thelma Hunt. The interview is being done in the Himmelfarb Health Sciences Library in the Bloedorn Audio Visual section. Today is July 10. Dr. Hunt is being interviewed by Dr. James W. Watts.

Dr. Watts (Q): Dr. Hunt, I'd like to start the interview by asking you about your first contact with George Washington University.

Dr. Hunt (A): My first contact with George Washington University was in the spring of 1921. That was just before I graduated from the Central High School in Washington, D.C. in June 1921. I came, then, to the University to take a series of competitive examinations given for Washington high school students who were interested in scholarships to the George Washington University. I came here and spent three or four days, for six half days of examinations, and it turned out that I did win a scholarship. There were seven scholarships and all seven were won competitively by classmates of mine and myself at the Central High School. I was the second in line. Harold A. Wheeler, who was one of the seven, was a classmate of mine both in high school and at the George Washington University. Harold became an outstanding physicist, ultimately received an honorary Doctor of Science degree from George Washington. He's now at the Hazeltine Corporation of Long Island as their chief scientist. If you're interested, I could mention some of the outstanding things that I remember about that first contact with G.W.U. The first person that I saw was, the person that I always refer to as Dean Wilbur, he was in the English Department of the University. He was then Dean of what came to be known as Columbian College and he was in charge of the scholarship examinations. One of the English questions on the scholarship examination had to do with an Irish playwright who wrote the drama "Playboy of the Western World". That wasn't a very well-known play on the part of high school students but I happened to have learned something about it. Later, after the examinations were over and graded, Dean Wilbur made the comment that I was the only one in the group who knew anything about "Playboy of the Western World". So, I guess, maybe, that's one of the reasons I got the scholarship. That literary start did not carry through very far at the George Washington University. In fact, I think my only literature course taken here was one with former Dean Balwell, and I don't think he

was very impressed with my expressed interests in English literature at that time. So Dean Wilbur was my first contact.

Q: I think it's interesting - the little things that influence ones life - what one knows or doesn't know. Don't you think so?

A: I think that's true too. Now, maybe you would like for me, in connection with my first contact with the George Washington University, to tell you how I happened to come down here to take those scholarship exams and pursue getting admitted to the George Washington University.

Q: Yes, I certainly would. You didn't mention where you came from, I hope you will tell us about that.

A: You mean my previous schooling?

Q: You said you went to Central.

A: I went to Central High School, the school at 11th and Clifton Street on 13th and Florida Avenue. Its name was changed to Cardoza, with shifts in black-white population areas in the city, and its change to a black high school before integration. Anyway, its name was Central High School in the olden days and it was then a new school. I guess at the time, it was one of the finest high schools and school buildings in the country. It had everything, including a swimming pool and the largest stadium for playing games in the city. It was opened in the fall of 1917 as a brand new school and that's the fall I entered in the ninth grade and stayed there until I graduated in June 1921.

Q: Where are you from?

A: Well, at the time I was going to high school, my family lived out in one of the suburbs of Washington that's now a part of College Park, in Berwyn, Maryland. I had come to Washington in 1912, my family having moved there from Knoxville, Tennessee where I did the first three grades of my schooling.

Q: I didn't realize you were from Knoxville.

A: Yes, I was born in Arkansas, but my family moved to Knoxville when I was about a year and a half old, so I don't remember much about that move. However, I do remember a number of things about the Knoxville

residence and coming to Washington. Anyway, that's the route by which I landed here.

Q: And now back to your schooling, did you get a degree from George Washington University?

A: Yes, as a matter of fact, I have four degrees from George Washington University. I have a B.A., which I got in 1924, an M.A., which I got in 1925, a Ph.D., which I got in 1927, and an M.D., which I got in 1935.

Q: You got a B.A., an M.A., a Ph.D and an M.D.?

A: Yes, in that order.

Q: Getting four degrees, that's quite a few degrees.

A: Well, many people say it is. I liked to go to school and I liked to study, so I just went. Except for an interim between the Ph.D and the M.D., all the rest of them were done with no interval between. I did the Ph.D in three years between 1924 and 1927. I think I may be the youngest Ph.D. in George Washington University, I'm not quite sure, of that, but I was 23 years old when I got the Ph.D. degree.

Q: You really enjoyed school, didn't you?

A: Oh, yes. I really liked school, all of the levels of it. I don't have such wonderful memories of elementary school - but high school and all the college years were very enjoyable to me.

Q: I can remember when I graduated from V.M.I., I had a room mate who was the first man in his class and won what was called the Jackson Hope Medal(?) at V.M.I. and the one thing that he knew was he didn't want to go to work, so he went to law school and went to medical school. I've always enjoyed school and academics and learning something.

A: I feel the same way. I guess my academic school career in college was perhaps a little different from yours in the sense that most of the time, I not only went to school, but also held a job earning money. But I'm sure it sounds as though you enjoyed school as much as I did.

Q: Is there anything in academic school that you would like to talk about?

A: I think I was going to tell you something - and before I forget it - let me tell you about my landing at George Washington University. I had, of course, been interested in going on to school all the time I was in high school. My family, having five children and my being the oldest, did not have much money to send me on to school, so I had a little bit of a problem of how I was going to get to college. The reason I landed at George Washington University: I had a Latin teacher who graduated from George Washington University with a Masters degree (I'm speaking of Emily Margaret White). She was very active at the University in the organization called Columbian Women. I had her as a Latin teacher for four years at Central High School, and she is the one who told me about the scholarships that were available at George Washington and urged me to apply for one. I think, in a sense, I have her to thank for that because, at that time, we did not have such thriving, active, college advisory offices in high schools that we have nowadays, so except for her I might not have learned about George Washington University.

Q: When I was back in college, I never had an advisor. And in medical school, I don't remember having an advisor.

A: I think advisors are something of recent origin. I never had an advisor in high school and I never had an advisor all the way through academic school at George Washington or the medical school, except informally.

Q: What I did was ask people that I thought might give some advice. As I look back, I think I maybe knew what I wanted to do and I just wanted to find whether they confirmed it or not.

A: I probably wasn't as certain as to what I was going to do as I was going through college and going to the university as you were. When I started to George Washington University as a freshman in the fall of 1921, largely through the influence of a chemistry teacher by the name of Miss Gatch at Central, I had become interested in chemistry. At that time it was possible for teachers in the high school, if they had a large enough group of interested students, to give a second year of a given science in high school and she gave us a second year of chemistry, which I took as a course. She was very influential and interested me in chemistry. So, I came to the George Washington University with the idea at the beginning that I would major in chemistry. I had some interest in medicine, but it was so far in the back of my mind then that I don't

think it played much of a role except I was generally interested in sciences and did take sciences - one or sometimes two each year in college. Since we're talking about courses in college, I majored for the B.A., the M.A. and the Ph.D., three academic degrees, in psychology. I shifted from chemistry to psychology as a proposed major during my second year at George Washington, through personal encouragement and interest in the subject, I guess. I base much of my decision to shift my major to psychology on the way in which Fred Moss, who then was in the Psychology Department, taught the courses that I took and his general encouragement of me.

Q: So you've been interested in psychology since you were a sophomore?

A: That's right. That's when I developed the interest in psychology.

Q: That's continued up until the present time.

A: Oh, yes. As a matter of fact, although I went to medical school and have a medical degree and have a license to practice medicine, my major career, I think one would say, has been in psychology. I taught psychology for 41 years before I retired from G.W.U. and for 25 years was executive officer of the Department of Psychology now a position designated as chair or chairperson. I'm still doing work in psychology.

Q: Now, when I was talking to you fairly recently, it seems to me you told me that right now you have a special title of Professor Emeritus, with something else tacked on.

A: My title is Professor Emeritus of Psychology (in residence).

Q: In residence, that's the first time I've heard of that.

A: It's official, since it's on my appointment letter and it's down in print. As I understand it, it is a "tack-on" if you're still doing active work paid by the university. Now, "tack-on" would not occur if you were doing work on your own, but if you're still doing work in psychology, in the department for the university, that title is put on. I retired as a full time professor in the psychology department. Since then, I have taught every summer term and every fall term at least one course per term. So, I'm entitled to that in residence "tack-on".

Q: I should say so. So that means for fifteen years you've continued

after your retirement?

A: That's right and I'm about to start a course this summer on July 20, so I'm still "at it", as one might say. I'll also be teaching one in the fall.

Q: Let me ask you about your association with Dr. Moss. I believe you indicated that Dr. Moss was one of the pioneers in medical testing. Was that it?

A: Yes, Fred Moss, I'll call him that, or maybe it would be better if I referred to him as Dr. Moss, that's what the students always called him. Dr. Moss was very energetic and he always had lots of ideas and liked to start new things and I can talk about some of the different things that he carried on in which I was involved. But, you asked about the medical tests. Now, I think the work on the medical aptitude test started before I was in medical school. The initial work was done on it in 1927, maybe starting slightly in the latter part of 1926, but let's say 1927.

Q: You're now talking about aptitude tests?

A: Yes.

Q: Medical aptitude tests?

A: Yes. The test that I think you're referring to, at that stage, was labeled the Scholastic Aptitude Test for Medical Schools. Reading from the earliest copy of this test, which I brought with me, it was co-authored by r. Moss and Dr. Oscar B. Hunter, the elder of the father and son doctors by that name. Whether Dr. Hunter was in the medical school as a professor teaching bacteriology or pathology, I'm not sure.

Q: I think he taught both.

A: I'm pretty sure that's true, in fact I took both of the courses. I remember the bacteriology more. He later became acting dean. I guess he preceeded the appointment of Dr. Bloedorn. Anyway, whichever he was, professor or acting dean - at the time of his work on the aptitude test, he must have had something to do with admissions. He and Dr. Moss got their heads together and, recognizing the phenomenon that I'm sure is still true - that there are many more applicants to medical schools than

places - saw the possibility of psychological testing; they visualized that a properly developed and validated test (and I'm speaking about a written test) could be used as a helpful adjunct to other criteria for admission. So, the two of them, with assistants primarily in the psychology department (and I happened to be one of them) began the construction of the test. A preliminary, Form 1 of this Scholastic Aptitude Test for medical school, was administered as an experimental test the first day they entered the medical school to the class that graduated in 1932. In this class there were 72 who remained long enough to be part of the study. This class took the test the first day they went to medical school in the fall of 1928. The test obviously didn't count as an admission instrument, but hopefully, they took it in a serious way. There was no evidence that they didn't. This class was then followed in an experimental validity study through medical school until graduation, through internship and through getting licensed to practice medicine, all that length of time. Do you want me to give a little history of what went on with medical admissions tests?

Q: I think it would be important.

A: Alright. I'll outline the history as I know it and I think I'm very familiar with it because

Q: You actually helped collaborate.

A: Right. I was a collaborator and my name appeared as a collaborator on all except the first form of the test. My name doesn't appear on Form 1 but it appears as a collaborator on all subsequent tests until medical school admissions testing was taken over by the Education Testing Service after World War II. Now, to sort of go through the history of that test, I followed it very closely and actually did a lot of the statistical work that was done in the studies of the test. At the end of two years of study of this experimental group, when they had finished two years of medical school, Dr. Moss went to a meeting of the Association of American Medical Colleges and gave a report of the validity of these tests and the assistance they could offer in predicting success in medical school studies. The Association of American Medical Colleges reacted favorably and at this meeting appointed an "Aptitude Test Committee", which was to work with Dr. Moss in heading a local office here in Washington for further experimental study of this test in whatever number of schools wanted to volunteer to participate in further studies.

Q: Let me ask you - if I understand that - Dr. Moss presented a paper at the scientific meetings, and that aroused so much interest that promptly a committee was formed to

A: That's right, the Association of American Medical Colleges' Committee I referred to was formed. And sort of wandering astray a little bit in my historical story, a person very interested in the test, from the standpoint of the Association of American Medical Colleges, was the man who was then the Executive Secretary of the Association of American Medical Colleges, a man by the name of Dr. Zapffe. The first chairman of this Aptitude Test Committee was a Dr. Sollman, who was then the Dean of the Western Reserve University Medical School. He remained chairman of the Aptitude Test Committee for some time.

Q: As we go along I'm writing a few of these things down so they can be understood by the typist and not spelled wrong. Now go on.

A: To come back to this Medical Scholastic Aptitude Test. As I indicated, an Aptitude Test Committee was set up by the Association of American Medical Colleges. Dr. Moss, having carried on the administrative activities for administering the test, as it was originally set up experimentally, was designated as the Executive Secretary of this Committee. The Committee operated here in Washington, D.C. actually out of Dr. Moss' office; not out of his office at the university, but in an office which he had at that time in the Columbia Medical Building.

Q: So, Dr. Moss was carrying on some private practice in medicine while teaching psychology in the school?

A: That's right.

Q: That's what you did.

A: Yes, I did the same thing he did. From 1937 on until my retirement I did some private work while teaching full time. Not with a private office, however, until 1948.

Q: As a good friend of mine says having much to do keeps you off the streets.

A: It sure keeps you busy. Staying off the streets and keeping busy

have always been a part of my life. I guess it's a part of my hyperthyroid nature or something - but I've always been very active and very busy. As a matter of fact, to show you that I can do two things at once, I went through medical school and taught a full schedule in psychology at the same time.

Q: I think you told me that. You were teaching psychology full time and going to medical school.

A: Right, I was teaching psychology full time. Now, I did get permission, since I was teaching full time, to spread the first two years of the medical school - those were the more or less academic years - over three years, so I had five years to get through medical school instead of four. I don't suppose anybody would get that privilege today, but those involved allowed me to convince them it was a good idea, even though it might have been a good idea primarily for me.

Q: I can't help thinking that things are getting so much more formal - not just formal - but rigid than they were.

A: Well, I think they are getting more rigid. Of course, one would have to admit that, what one must learn as a background for medicine is a greater encompass of knowledge now than it was when I was in medical school, when I entered in 1930. But true, I did teach full time and go to medical school. At that time Dr. Fred Moss was chairman of the department and he actually encouraged me to go to medical school.

Q: That's what I was going ask you. When you had the interest in psychology in college and through your M.A. and your Ph.D., why did you have the desire to get an M.D. degree?

A: I suppose there were a number of things that entered into that.

Q: Sometimes I'll try not to make the question longer than the answer, but I don't know whether you remember Dr. John Fulton, who is the director of the primate laboratory at Yale and the experimental work on the frontal lobe done by Fulton and Jacobsen, led, I've heard it said, more directly to an operation. This one was a frontal lobotomy, than any single piece of work he's ever done, it's usually come up rather gradually. But Dr. Fulton was encouraged by Dr. Harvey Cushing to go to medical school because he felt that if he had contact with patients, then that would direct his efforts along different lines in experimental

work on primates. Now, was that a somewhat similar thing with you in psychology?

A: Perhaps somewhat similar. When you mention Dr. Fulton and Dr. Jacobsen, that brings to mind you and Dr. Walter Freeman, although I can't give you credit for encouraging me to go to medical school, because I was already through when I met you and Walter Freeman in connection with the prefrontal lobotomies. But to go back to your question about encouragement in going to medical school, I had had a vague idea about going to medical school and some desire, perhaps more than vague, for a long time. Dr. Moss, who was then chairman of the psychology department, encouraged me to go to medical school, perhaps because he had a Ph.D. and an M.D.

Interview with Dr. Thelma Hunt

July 10, 1984

Begin Tape 1, Side 2

Q: Thelma, about the time the tape ran out, I believe you were saying that you were encouraged to go to medical school by Dr. Moss, that he himself had a Ph.D. and graduated, also, from medical school and he encouraged you.

A: Right. He encouraged me. I'm not sure why he encouraged me. It was very rewarding to me that he did because I was anxious to go and he also, of course, was liberal as the chairman of the department in granting me permission to teach full time while I was in medical school, and arranging a feasible schedule. Most of my teaching was in five and six o'clock p.m. classes, so I could go to medical school during the day; although I did have a few daytime classes that jibed with the medical school schedule.

Q: When he encouraged you to do it, how did he present this so you felt it was worthwhile to spend four or five years or so doing, getting this extra degree? What was the reasoning behind it?

A: I'm not sure I can go back at this stage and try to read Dr. Moss' mind, but I think - first of all, it sort of flattered my ego that he thought I could do it. I guess that was one of the things and I think he was a man that was very interested in ^{encouraging} his better students to accomplish things. I think he thought I could accomplish more and attain more if I got this other degree in addition to the Ph.D., which

certainly turned out to be true as I judge my own life. Let me say one other thing about being encouraged to go to medical school.

Q: As I listen to you talk up to this point, Dr. Moss had more influence on you than anybody in your academic career. That is, when I say academic career I mean as a student.

A: Yes, I certainly think that is true. Now, if I might make a digression that has nothing to do with going to medical school, and I could point out another thing that had to do with my going in the direction that my career took in psychology. I've forgotten the exact date but it was somewhere in the latter part of 1923, until I graduated with the Ph.D. in 1927, while I was studying for these academic degrees I worked at the old U.S. Civil Service Commission, which is now the Office of Personnel Management. My boss was a Dr. Lawrence J. O'Rourke who had come, a year before I was hired, Research Director to develop, for the Civil Service Commission, new type examinations. Prior to that, the Commission had been using just ordinary school examinations. When you took a civil service examination, you went down to the Commission and you took an arithmetic test probably. It consisted of just problems set out on a blank sheet of paper where you put all the work right on the paper. You wrote a composition, which got graded for handwriting also and maybe you took a spelling test, just an old academic kind of test. Now these new types of psychological examinations, multiple choice exams, etc, had come in with the psychological work during World War I on the part of the Army. When the war was over, the Civil Service Commission thought, well, there are some kinds of tests there that we could well use. So, Dr. O'Rourke was appointed as Research Director and I was hired, as I said, and worked there, from 1923 to 1927. When I was about to get my Ph.D., which I got in June 1927, I had worked there for Dr. O'Rourke for over three years and I had apparently done very well. I had gotten two promotions during the three years I was there. The depression hadn't hit yet, so they were still giving promotions. Anyway, Dr. O'Rourke told me "I like your work here but this is no place for you". I think he had in mind, primarily, the fact that, as a woman, I probably wouldn't go very far in the U.S. government, in that kind of work at that time. At any rate, he said, "This is no place for you to stay now that you have a Ph.D.". So did Dr. Moss, my professor. He said that government work is not for you, he said it doesn't have enough challenge, etc, etc. So, what could I do, a woman with a Ph.D.? Well, they both thought that teaching might be a possibility. So I went down and registered at a teacher's agency called Adams Teaching Agency, I

think it's still here. I registered to teach psychology in a college. And I decided that I would take the first job I was offered; I didn't care where it was. Well, the first job I was offered (and I wasn't offered it until almost two weeks until school opened in September) was a job to teach psychology in what was then Middle Tennessee State Teacher's College.

Q: Where was that?

A: Middle Tennessee, located in Murfreesboro, Tennessee. The college is now the part of the three part University of Tennessee. The other parts are in Memphis, and Knoxville. What they were trying to do, as I sized up the situation when I went, was to change the college into a part of the university system instead of calling it a teacher's college. They needed a few more Ph.D.'s to get it off the ground, so I was one they could pick up at a late stage.

Q: So often these certificates, degrees and so on, give us an opportunity.

A: As a matter of fact, I'm surprised they didn't send me home after I went down there. I went down there sight unseen without an interview and the president who interviewed me I didn't think was very much impressed. I think he was a little bit afraid I was going to teach too much evolution. But I wouldn't really accuse him of that. I had a very enjoyable year; stayed one year and then the George Washington University added one more person in the psychology department. I think Dr. Moss may have been the only full time person in the department. Anyway, he asked me if I wanted to come back and have this newly created job, which of course I did; I didn't want to stay down in middle Tennessee the rest of my life.

Q: So he's really been a sponsor of yours for many years?

A: Of yes, he was very much a sponsor for many years.

Q: There have been times when I thought, as I was going through my training, for somebody just before me or at some stage, would acquire the professor as a sponsor and it always seems to me I never did acquire any of those men as a sponsor. They all gave me good recommendations, but they didn't push me like they did some of the others.

A: Well, Dr. Moss was very much a sponsor of mine and he was a very pushy person. If you didn't respond to his encouragement, then pretty soon you were dropped by the wayside.

Q: Would that be what you'd politically call "patronage"? What you do is to choose people who have ideas similar to yours and who would promote your ideas. Don't you? That's the way you get things done.

A: That is true. Now, I was going to say - another thing about being encouraged to go to medical school. Again, I'll mention Dr. Moss. Dr. Moss was very much of a - call it a biologically oriented psychologist - a devotee of the psychologist, John B. Watson, who was, I suppose one would say the originator of behaviorism, as far as American psychology is concerned. He was at Johns Hopkins University at the time. I don't know whether you're familiar with John B. Watson or not.

Q: Could I just tell you one thing? When I was interviewed by Tom Peery, sometimes his questions were longer than my answers. But when I graduated from VMI in chemical engineering, I never had any of these things like psychology or ethics, philosophy, so I borrowed my room mates book and I spent three months reading and I read, for three months, almost everything he took in two years, except history, those books were too thick and too long. But it was one of the best summers I ever had and I remember reading about Watson at that time.

A: Yes. Watson, as I said, was the behaviorist and, of course, he believed that everything was biological - that you came into the world with inherited biological instincts and basic motivational drives and then everything on top of that was training. My introduction to psychology, in terms of the Psychology 1 Course textbook, was Watson's book called Psychology from the Standpoint of the Behaviorist. So, I became pretty well imbued with this biological outlook for psychology and I think that had some influence, also, because if you have this biological outlook, as a basis for psychology, then it fits in more with the medical approach than other outlooks. John B. Watson was a very straight forward person.

Q: Did you know him?

A: I met him a few times. He was at Johns Hopkins University. What I'm about to tell you took place in Washington. Now, he was very much in opposition with other schools of psychology, including social

psychologists who put everything on your social experiences, and the psychoanalysts who put everything on your subconscious mind. Freud was not entirely nonbiological, but at least the way most people looked upon him, he wasn't very biological. So, anyway, my psychological viewpoint influenced me. Now, what I was going to say about John B. Watson? There were these other people on the other side of the fence, and one of these persons was a psychologist by the name of William McDougall. He had been, in his original academic work, at Harvard. But at the time the event I am going to mention took place, he had been siphoned off from Harvard and was at Duke University. I don't know whose sponsorship it was, but a debate was arranged between Watson and McDougall on the best approach to psychology. Now they were perhaps the two most outstanding men in psychology at that time, academically. The debate was held in Constitution Hall here in the city of Washington and I went to that.

Q: Oh, it was a big thing if it was held in Constitution Hall!

A: Constitution Hall was full. I think every student and every professor in psychology for miles around came to hear it. I can't remember much of what was said, but, anyway, I remember going to that debate. Not soon after that, Watson left Johns Hopkins so his influence in psychology, in terms of academia, went down. He went into the advertising business and became vice president of the J. Walter Thompson Advertising Company and probably made millions of dollars, which he would have never made in academia. He left academia because he was too much interested in his girl students.

Q: Oh, was he really? What do you know about that?

A: If he was still alive, I probably wouldn't say that for fear he would get after me. It was my understanding that he was forced to leave. In those days University administrations didn't put up with that kind of thing.

Q: No, they didn't. That was interesting. He was interested in behavior, wasn't he? And interested in biology, so that came about quite naturally. He just carried it too far.

A: I think we got off somewhere back there.

Q: How did this debate go?

A: I can't remember if they declared a winner; I don't think it was one in which they necessarily expected to declare a winner. It's been so far back I don't even remember. What I remember is the dynamicness of both of the men who participated in it.

Q: So, it looks like you were influenced by Watson in the biological/behaviorial approach rather.

A: I think one would say that was true. At least the influences at the time I went to medical school might have been considered influences of inclining me toward going to medical school. I think we left off somewhere before I finished comments about the Scholastic Aptitude Test for Medical Schools.

Q: You said that you wanted to return and say something additional about the aptitude test.

A: When I started out, I had in mind sort of giving a history of that aptitude test. As I recall, where we left off in the conversation about it - the test had been set up for an experimental program in fourteen medical schools. A report of the experimental work in the fourteen medical schools was made. I think the report was made by Dr. Moss, but I'm not certain of exactly who made it. Anyway, a report was made and the Association of American Medical Colleges decided to set up a country wide testing program in which the test would be given all over the country and reports on the test would be sent to the medical schools to which students were applying. A report would be sent to every medical school in the country so that the admissions committees could make whatever use they wanted to of the test. Now, this, as I would visualize it, was the start of the Medical School Admissions Test. I'm not sure at what stage the name was changed from Scholastic Aptitude Test to Medical School Admissions Test, but this was the beginning of a national admissions test. It was carried on by the Association of the American Medical Colleges under the committee that originally was headed by Dr. Sollmon, who's name I mentioned before, with Dr. Moss serving as secretary of the committee until we entered World War II. And that, as you know, was in 1941. Now, when we entered World War II in 1941, the personnel research division of the Army took over the medical school admissions test and it's administration because when we were in the war, I guess one would say the only people who could be in the medical school had to be in the military service unless they were among the females, the old or the blind. So, the Army took over the Medical School

Admission Test.

Q: I didn't know that.

A: It's interesting that I was hired by the Personnel Research Division of the Army, on a part-time consulting basis, to help in the development of the test, which was actually developed in the Personnel Research Division. After the war was over, the medical school admissions testing arrangements changed. Any connection that I had with it ended with this change that took place at the end of the war. The Association of American Medical Colleges decided that they would make contracts with established testing organizations and not maintain a committee to supervise the medical school testing themselves. So, then, the first organization that they hired to do this was the Psychological Corporation, an organization still in existence. They have, at various other times, hired others, including the Educational Testing Service. I'm not sure who is in charge at the present time and when I say hire, I don't really mean hire. I mean they agreed to sponsor, in a sense, the organization. The organization collects fees required of the students, and administers, scores and reports the test. That is the plan under which the test is administered, as I understand it, at the present time.

Q: I believe you can feel justly proud of the role you played in this test which is so widely used and considered so important.

A: Well, I did have an important role in the early stages of it. I certainly enjoyed the efforts that I put forth, including the research efforts and the contacts that were made in connection with it.

Q: Thelma, we've been talking primarily about the psychological work that you've done, considerable time being devoted to the Aptitude Test. Would you tell us a little bit about your medical school and your internship?

A: Well, as I said, I started medical school in the fall of 1930. I had had - these might be of interest - before I went to medical school a number of contacts that gave me some acquaintance with the medical school. I might mention a few of these, not that they are terribly important, but I think some of them are quite interesting. First of all, my initial contact almost goes back to my first contact at George Washington University. But let me tell you about this first contact with the medical school in the physical sense of the school. When I

came here as a freshman liberal arts student, since as I've said before I had some interest in majoring in chemistry, I was signed up for the introductory college chemistry course. At that time, all the medical school facilities were centered around 1335 H Street NW, which was the medical school building with the old hospital next door. And the liberal arts academic activities were centered in a series of renovated dwellings, mostly along G Street. None of the large buildings were on the campuses. This was the fall of 1921. There were no chemistry laboratories in the G Street complex. So, the chemistry courses were held at the medical school. Now they weren't a part of the medical school but they were held there, with the lectures in old Hall A; I've forgotten where we had the labs. Anyway, the chemistry courses were taught down at the medical school. So, in taking the chemistry course the first year I was here, I had to trek from approximately 21st and G Street down to 1335 H Street to get a chemistry course about twice a week, so that was my first contact with the medical school. I didn't have much contact with the medical staff and teachers, but at least I saw the building and learned and sat in old Hall A, which I sat in many, many times after that when I went to medical school. Now, another acquaintantship with the medical school that occurred before I went to medical school and I don't remember the year, I think it was probably the first year I was a graduate student working for an M.A. I went down to the medical school and took a bacteriology course with Dr. Oscar B. Hunter. By the way, I did get credit for that course in the medical school later on. As a little aside, I got credit for that one, but I got mixed up in a change of Deanship in the medical school and had to take medical school physiology twice. Not that I didn't profit from it, but it made me mad at the time I had to do it. The reason I had to do that was because the professor from whom I took the first physiology course, named Dr. French, was lost in the shuffle when the university got the new Dean, Earl Baldwin McKinley. He made a rule that nobody could teach in the academic courses and carry on a practice. They could do that in the clinical courses, but not if you taught the basic courses you couldn't carry on a practice. Well, that was too much for Dr. French, so you could say he resigned, under pressure or whatever the term might be. And since I had had my original physiology course with him, Dean McKinley made me take it over again when Dr. Albritton came in to replace Dr. French.

Q: I think, when we were talking informally - Dr. Albritton - both of us felt the same about him.

A: I think some of my feelings for Dr. Albritton then were colored by the fact that I was made to repeat the course with him and I thought I'd had a better course than he was offering under Dr. French.

Q: I had a couple of run-ins with Dr. Albritton, but we ended up friends because I told you he came to see me as a patient after he had retired and was working at the National Institutes of Health.

A: To think just a little bit further, there were some other things that got me acquainted with the medical school set up a little bit before I went to medical school. At one time over a period (I don't remember, two or three years, I guess) I taught a course "Psychology for Nurses", which was given in Hall A in the old medical school. I think at that time George Washington University had a school of nursing which accounted for the fact that the course was held in that building.

Q: I think it did. The school of nursing was discontinued before I came to George Washington in 1935. I ran across a good many very fine nurses who had graduated from that school of nursing.

A: Well, the time that I did the teaching would have been probably in the late 1920's or the early 1930's. Not only did the George Washington University nursing students take this course, but also students from others of the nursing schools in the District of Columbia. I think some at that time there were about half a dozen nursing schools in the District of Columbia. I think others have been discontinued now, not just the George Washington University Nursing School. Then, because I had been involved in participating in the development of this medical aptitude test, somewhere along the line and this would have been during the 1930's, I developed, with some assistance from a couple of graduate students who'd worked with me, a series of tests which we called "Nursing Aptitude Tests", which were used by the Nursing Admissions Committee. At that time, I think all of the nursing schools in the District of Columbia admitted their students on the basis of agreements of committees that involved all the schools. They wanted to make use of a test and did make use of this one over a period of, I suppose, five, six or seven years. Ultimately, nursing schools, as such, in the District disappeared. I think largely because of their being absorbed in college programs. As this became true the ETS College Admissions Tests replaced the special nursing school tests.

Now, as far as my medical school days are concerned, despite the fact that a lot of people who went to medical school (I don't know if

it's still true of medical students or not, it was true of some of my classmates) thought that medical school work was just a succession of drudgeries to get everything learned. Strange as it may seem to some of my classmates, I enjoyed my medical school work very much. I used to study with some other medical school students. When I was in medical school, I had the Ph.D. as I've already said and I was teaching full time in the psychology department. But as far as possible, I tried to act just like a medical student as if I hadn't even a B.A. degree. I didn't try to act stupid but I never tried to put on that I had this degree, I just put myself down there with all the rest of the medical students. I especially remember Osborne Christenson, who practiced medicine in Salisbury, Maryland, so that on occasions after medical school I saw him. The other classmate, I have in mind is Clarence Qualheim, who came from the west coast and went to Seattle to practice, so I haven't seen him since we all graduated from medical school. The three of us used to do a lot of studying together.

Q: May I interrupt to ask, how many women were in your class? What percentage of women were in your class?

A: Let's see, I've nearly forgotten. I think there were 72 of us who graduated and the percentage was fairly large, I think there were 6 women who graduated out of 72.

Q: Six women. I think I told you, in my class which was 1928 there was just one woman in our class.

A: For that particular class of which I was a part, I don't know whether the medical school had decided to take in more women; but it had a larger number of women than classes had had before. Well, anyway, I enjoyed medical school very much and I was going to say some interesting little sideline about the studying. I remember that (tape now ends)

Interview with Dr. Thelma Hunt

Begin Tape 2, Side 1

(Side 2 is blank)

Q: Thelma, when that tape ended, you were talking about -

A: Talking about the students with whom I was associated in Medical School.

Q: Your student associates at George Washington.

A: Yes. I'll pick up, I was about to say - I'll mentioned these two because I

Q: That was Christenson and Qualheim.

A: And I remember we used to, when we wanted to review something that was routine memory stuff or things that might be written on a card, we'd take a pack of cards and flip through them while we were riding around in a car in Rock Creek Park. And I guess this sticks in my mind more than any other because when we get tired of reciting these things we were trying to learn from memory then we would leave off a little while and sing "Stormy Weather". I don't know how many will be reading this or listening to this will know the song "Stormy Weather", but it was a favorite then. This procedure of studying was easier done in those days than now.

Q: I remember "Stormy Weather" quite well.

A: And, I studied with a couple of other students. One was named Kuitert, the other Hart. One of the reasons I mentioned them particularly, was their connection with G.W.U. registrar. I don't know how many of those who are listening to this will remember how our former Registrar at George Washington University, Mr. Nessell.

Q: I remember Mr. Nessell.

A: These two students lived with Mr. Nessell. So, by taking them on as study companions, I got a lot of scuttlebutt that went on in the Registrar's Office through these students. Anyway, I'll just mention these four.

Q: I noticed as you talked, you talked about being influenced so much by Dr. Moss. That continued through your student days and your further academic career when you were a professor. Was there anybody in the medical school who had any particular influence on you?

A: Well, let me see.

Q: Not in the same sense as Dr. Moss did.

A: Thinking of the medical school brings me to mention my professor with whom you did the prefrontal lobotomy. Dr. Walter Freeman, of course, was professor in the Neurology Department and he was one of my favorite professors and he knew of the work I had done in psychology. I think he thought I was going into psychiatry or neurology or some related field. Maybe he wanted to encourage that. Anyway, I felt that he had a considerable influence in my life.

Q: He was a very stimulating man, I thought.

A: I think I could say he was the most stimulating professor that I had in terms of his presentation of material and his enthusiasm. I don't know whether most people would point this out about him. He could go up to a blackboard and make a beautiful drawing of the brain, bilaterally, using both hands.

Q: I think that's what the students remember more than anything else. When I joined as Chief of Neurosurgery, I had to use a different method entirely. You never try to compete with somebody else on his terms, you have to compete on your own terms. So, I never tried to draw anything and if I did I'd label a very obvious thing; I'd say "This is the brain" drawing it. But when Walter Freeman left Washington, I said in something that I wrote, "some of the sparkle went out of neurology/neurosurgery in all of Washington when Walter Freeman left".

A: He was a very stimulating person and later on I got invited to attend the various meetings of the neurology department and got more acquainted with some of the people in it than I would have otherwise gotten acquainted with. One person I remember particularly in the department was Dr. Groh; you probably know Dr. Groh.

Q: He was our first resident in neurology, he came in 1938. I believe he graduated from the University of Pittsburg and was resident at D.C. General and I think he's one of the best examples that I know of anybody that brings out the difference between impairment and disability, because Groh had a cane when he came -

A: By the time I knew him he had the disability, as far as his locomotion is concerned and also his speech difficulty.

Q: He had part of his tongue taken out and then he had his whole tongue taken out and he continued to practice and lecture in spite of the fact

that he did not have a tongue.

A: I know. I always thought he was a very amazing person in terms of how he functioned with the impairments that he had.

Q: Just to get a little more about Groh on the record, because I think it is important, he finally began to use two canes to get around and, as a result of using his shoulders for weight bearing, he developed arthritis in both shoulders and it was so painful that he finally had to have one shoulder replaced. Then, by that time, he could not get along well enough to carry on any practice, but he carried on for - I'd say - 35 to nearly 40 years.

A: I continued to have a close relationship with him long after the first relationship, which I think grew up, maybe partially because of my association with you and Walter Freeman and prefrontal lobotomies. Not that he was involved in them. But I continued to have a close relationship with Dr. Groh until he retired from his psychiatric practice. Mainly working with him and doing psychological diagnostic work on patients of his for purposes of evaluating deteriorating brain effects or evaluating behavioral and personality characteristics he thought should be evaluated in his patients. So I had this long association with him until he gave up his practice, actually.

Q: In that connection, I sent you a number of patients and one of the main things had to do with distinguishing whether this impairment of function was due to psychological conditions or to organic brain disease.

A: Yes, I appreciate the fact that I had worked with you on that same sort of problem and still am doing so in connection with my private psychological-psychiatric practice.

Q: I don't know whether there's anything else you'd like to comment on that, or would you like to go to your work in the faculty?

A: Let me say one other thing. Every once in a while, as a medical student, I did run into funny things in being a woman and one of them, I remember. The first day I went to Dr. Reuter's Urology course he said, "I'm sorry to see I have some women here, it limits what kind of jokes I can tell".

Q: Dr. Reuter was a good teacher and certainly a very fine urologist.

A: I'm sure that's true.

Q: And he always looked dapper, elegantly dressed and his moustache was curled in just the right way.

A: Oh, yes. I remember him very well in that respect, as well as the statement he made the first day we met in that class. The statement did not sour me on admiring him. It, rather, made me admire his humor.

Q: I think one thing - somebody else told me this, but you confirmed this - that you had a little trouble getting an internship in spite of the fact that you had an M.D. and a Ph.D. and were an excellent student.

A: As a matter of fact, I would say, that was the only difficulty that I ran into as far as the medical school education and medical facilities in the District of Columbia were concerned. I did have trouble getting an internship. My original idea was to get an internship here in Washington, D.C. I think, as it turned out, it was probably fortunate that I did not, because I would have been too involved in the other things I was doing. I had gotten a leave of absence from my psychology academic job, postponing making decisions to whether I would keep it after I got back from an internship. I got this leave of absence to do an internship. I think it's probably, as I say, lucky, I could not get one here and in several places that I applied. The usual excuse was that they had no quarters for women in that day and age. This was back in 1936, when it was not permissible for women interns and men interns to live in the same corridor even in separate rooms. But, anyway, I couldn't get one in many places I applied. I did an internship, obviously got accepted there, at the Englewood General Hospital in Englewood, New Jersey. But there I had to live in the nurse's quarters, not in the quarters where the male interns lived. That didn't bother me. Maybe they were a little more favorable toward the women because they had a woman administrator. I think in that day and age most hospital administrators were male physicians. This administrator was Victoria Smith, who was a nurse, so she would obviously would have a more favorable feeling toward the women. It was a good internship, very good. It was done from July 1, 1936 to July 1, 1939. There was a year between medical school graduation and starting the internship in which I did not do any strictly medical work.

Q: After that, did you return to the department of psychology?

A: Well, when I finished the internship in 1937, the first thing I did when I got back to Washington the first of July was to take the D.C. Medical Board Exams to get a license to practice medicine. I think the exams started the the fifth of July; so on the fifteenth - the day after I finished the exams - I took my first trip to Europe. I decided at the moment that I'd had enough work in both medicine and psychology and took off to Europe. However, before I took off to Europe I did have this conversation with Cloyd Heck Marvin, who was then the President of George Washington University. Actually, I had this conversation with him before I took the Medical Board Exams. Anyway, there was a debate as to whether I would go into medicine, make that my career, or whether I would stay in the academic work. Dr. Moss was then not at the university. He had resigned in a fury, I think it was in the spring. It was during my internship years, so it was between 1936 and 1937. So he was no longer there as chairman of the department when I got back. I had a job as assistant professor in the department, and if I was going to go into medicine I would need to start out in a residency in whatever I decided to go into.

Q: Well, now, you've gone back then, have you not?

A: I've probably gotten myself a little confused in this report. This was in 1937 after I finished the internship. Then I had to make up my mind whether I was going to apply for residencies, which I had not done for at that time, or whether I was going to stay in academic work in psychology. I was assistant professor of psychology, just returning from having been on leave for a year. My previous psychology boss, Dr. Moss, had left the university. Dr. Mitchell Dreese was then the Chairman of the Psychology Department. I think he started out in the Education Department, but he was an Educational Psychologist. He told me if I wanted to stay in my academic career, it was fine with him. So, I went to have a conference with President Marvin, who settled in my mind the issue of whether I would stay on in the psychology department or resign my job and stay completely in the medical field. Well, it's obvious, from what I've already said, that I decided to stay. It was a very tense interview with President Marvin, as those of you connected with the University probably know interviews with Marvin could be. President Marvin was a very domineering sort of administrator and pretty much of what he said would be it. The faculty hadn't gained as much say of things as they have now, but anyway, I told him - and strange as it

may seem - he was also in favor of my staying at the university psychology department. But I made it clear to him that I would not stay unless I was given a clear indication from him that I would be put into a tenure rank where I would not be up against the situation of having to make up my mind again in a year. So, he kept

Q: Usually you don't get tenure until you are either an associate professor or a professor.

A: That's right. You see, I was an assistant professor and I would have to be an associate professor to have tenure. So, it boiled down to almost a question, "Are you willing to give me assurance of the associate professor rank where I will have tenure, otherwise I'm inclined not to stay". Well, I remember the conversation that I had with him and as I said a minute ago, it was a rather tense interview. You see, my old boss, Dr. Moss, had just resigned in a huff shortly before I came back to Washington after my internship. Dr. Moss and President Marvin, during a good part of Dr. Moss's career here, did not see eye to eye. They were both very domineering, intense types of persons and I guess persons of this type often don't hit it off so well. Anyway, he did resign in a huff in which Dr. Moss later told me that he told President Marvin where to head in and left. So it put me in a rather bad position. I'm surprised that President Marvin wanted to keep me at all. But he did, but he kept asking me about what I thought of Dr. Moss. I think he was afraid that if he kept me on, I'd just be his prototype and act the same way. So, finally, I told President Marvin, I said, "President Marvin, if I make up my mind to stay here in the psychology department, I can assure you that I will put all that's in me into it". I said, "You can be assured of that; that I will not be influenced in terms of my basic methods by Dr. Moss" but I said, "If you are asking me to kick over Dr. Moss and tell him that he's no longer part of my friendship or life, (a man that's done more for me and encouraged me than anybody else I can think of)", I said, "I just can't do that". So I said, "The choice is yours, not mine".

Q: Well, you made that perfectly clear.

A: I didn't want him to go on thinking that every time I said something that he would say, "You got that from Moss, where did you get that?" I don't know whether I should record these things in this interview.

Q: I don't see why not. I think those are important. If we don't say

those things, anybody who listens, we'll think we're just glossing over everything. Because anybody who's studying what's going in medical school knows that there are disagreements, sometimes pretty strong fights. I didn't feel quite about President Marvin like Dr. Bloedorn did, but I didn't have to deal with him in the same way. I had a few dealings with him, but I never felt like I had to really please the President too much, I did have to be a little more careful with the Dean. I did have a way of doing one thing, I always learned, and I learned this probably at home and also at VMI - if you use a lot of "Sirs", you can say almost anything as long as you continue to say "Sir". Then, when I had to disagree with Dean Bloedorn or Parks, I'd say, "Sir, I assume that you appointed me chairman and you can't take away my rank but you can take away the chairmanship in any single year. Do you want to know what I think?". Then I would go on and say what I think with a lot of "Sirs" on it. I think they were pretty doggone reasonable, from my point of view.

Did you get your associate professorship and tenure?

A: Yes I did.

Q: Good. And you were how old then?

A: Let's see, that would have been when I was 33. Not very long after I started on this associate professorship, I was made chairperson of the Department. As a matter of fact, it was less than a year, because Mitchell Dreese remained as chairman only one year after I came back from my internship. When I was appointed chairperson, the title was Executive Officer of the Department of Psychology, the position I held until 1963. I must not have had too many disqualifications in President Marvin's eyes because it was an appointive situation where I could have been replaced in a year, at that time. So I actually got along very well with President Marvin.

Q: So you were just with Chairman Dreese for one year?

A: Just one year, right. He got into military related activities and then very early, even before the United States went into the war, went into military service. He did return after that but, anyway that's the way things went at that stage.

Q: Did he come back into the department?

A: Yes, Dreese came back after the war. He left the year that President Marvin retired. I've forgotten what year that is. He left, he retired. I'm sure he wasn't to a forced retirement age but he decided to go back to Pennsylvania where he lived and went back there to teach.

Q: Now, we've gotten in your career to your appointment as chairperson in psychology. I wonder if this would be a good time to take a break and have lunch and then pick up with your chairmanship at whatever point you want to. It seems to me this brings you to a different part of your career and probably the most important.

A: Yes, I think this is a good stopping point.

Q: Maybe, I don't know whether it's anymore exciting, but it's - now you are on your own.

A: Right, that's absolutely true.

Q: Dr. Hunt, we came to the point where you were ready to begin your chairmanship. You said that Dr. Dreese was chairman for a year and then he resigned.

A: He got into other more administrative activities. He stayed another year in some other kind of activity and then resigned. Anyway, he preceeded me.

Q: Then you became chairperson.

A: In 1938.

Q: Would you tell us what you think would be of greatest interest to you and to those who may read your interview?

A: Well, I was the chairman, as the generic term referring refer to that job. It had so many different designations. I shall continue to use this generic term. I was chairman from 1938 to 1963, twenty-five years. And during that time there were many things that went on in the psychology department. I think one of the significant things that took place was the changing of the department from a psychology department which covered the whole realm of psychology in a general way to a department that became more or less specialized. This was more at the

graduate level than the undergraduate level, but to a limited extent also at the undergraduate level. Students could choose to be in the field of experimental psychology, which is the general term still applicable in thinking about psychology covering the more theoretical research approaches to psychology. But they could be in the clinical field, which would be an aspect of psychology or psychology training oriented toward mental health problems; or they could be in the industrial, organizational, personnel field in which the interests would primarily center around employee problems, as employee selection, employee promotion, employee job performance evaluation, employee retiring, etc. Or they could be in a field of social psychology which has to do with social interactions, organizational activities and the like. Or they could be some aspect field of educational psychology.

Q: That would have required a good many more instructors and professors, would it not? Because no one person would capable of teaching all that.

A: That's true. The expansion and the changing in this direction did involve an expansion in the department and this took place in keeping with, or as these different emphasis came into the picture.

Q: Would you say that was something that was going on throughout the states or was it something you were doing primarily at George Washington?

A: Well, I think in the era in which I came in as chairman of the psychology department at George Washington University, most of these specialties had not had any development at all and they became an active instrumentation in the growth of the department. Now, I would not say that what took place here was nationally true in other departments, because psychology departments have developed in different ways. I might point out, as a problem in some of the later years of my chairmanship of the department here, there occurred a great split in our department in terms of supporting and retaining all of these applied fields in the psychology department, thinking that they were applied fields that did not belong to psychology as "a science". There was an era, and that was a very strong problem in the era I'm talking about that corresponded with my earlier days as chairman in which psychology, as a field of academic professional activity debated with itself the extent of which it wanted to be a "pure science" and the extent to which it was willing to be an applied science. Psychology, willing to be an

applied science, would have been willing to retain in the psychology department and fight very strongly to retain them. Such training programs as training people to be school counselors, training people to be personnel administrators - programs now being largely in the School of Education and School of Business and Public Administration at G.W.U.

Interview with Dr. Thelma Hunt
Begin Tape 3, Side 1

Q: You were speaking of the changes that occurred in the department and particularly with respect to the different types of psychology or psychological training.

A: Yes. I was speaking of - to sort of retrace my thoughts - how psychology, in those days and still today, can take the view that it is primarily a pure science and therefore it should devote its efforts to pure science training. This might be pure science training in the biological/biochemical basis of behavior, or a pure science training in some more socially oriented thinking of science. But, anyway, there has been this question, divergent viewpoints, as to the extent to which psychology, as a field in a university, should devote itself to specialized applied areas of training. The three principal ones to be considered are the training for educational services which would include the educational counselors in schools or school psychologists; the specialized training that relates to the mental health field which would be clinical psychology; or psychology applied to the industrial-personnel field, the field having to do with employees in the general sense of the word. And then there is perhaps, a fourth field, the field of applied social psychology, which would have to do with such things as opinion polling and social problems as they relate to group activities and the like. Now, the psychology department at George Washington University in the early part of my chairmanship career, felt that it wanted to be a department, that was a general sort of pure science kind of department. With that viewpoint, they lost most of the training of the education oriented people that would work in psychological things like school counselors and school psychologists to our School of Education. And they lost much of the - what would have originally been called the "industrial personnel" psychology. They lost much of that through the Business Administration and Public Administration Department here at the university. At the early stages of my chairmanship, the clinical emphasis had not developed to any extent. Clinical psychology, as a speciality in psychology, developed mainly after World War II

stemming out of activities of psychologists who worked in the military services during the war. So that was not quite in the same category and it did develop as a specialty program in psychology at George Washington University.

Now I mention other things that occurred during my chairmanship, related to the fact that I was chairman during the war (WW II) and during the post-war period. During the war the psychology department decreased in enrollment in graduate students. In fact, we discontinued Ph.D. programs during the war. We had no Ph.D. program except for finishing maybe one or two students who were enrolled prior to the war. And the general enrollment was quite small. That allowed me to do some things that were sort of sidelines to my psychology. One of these sidelines I'll mention. During the war I taught a large number of first-aid courses for the Red Cross. All those that I taught were taught on the George Washington campus, but they did have enrollments through other channels than purely student enrollment. They were not student credit courses but were courses given under the Red Cross. I had to get my certification for being a first-aid instructor from the Red Cross for the courses that were given under the Red Cross and for which people earned certificates for first-aid.

I was still chairman when we had the large influx of post-war veteran students and that created a tremendous administrative problem because the University, not just in the psychology department, took the view or adopted the principle that by markedly increasing the size of classes they could admit the maximum number of veteran students that could be serviced as students. This post-war era actually began with returning veterans who had been wounded and were still able to go back to school even before the war was completely over. The increased student enrollment was mainly in the undergraduate, more or less beginning courses, or early undergraduate courses. This meant that these enlarged enrollments had to be handled with minimum increase of staff, not only because the university was unwilling to support financially the commitment to increased full time staff; lent also to the fact that, at that immediate post-war period, you could not get qualified staff very easily.

Q: With these discussions on possible ways which the department might go, would that be comparable to what the administration faces when we see that there is a split in the administration about how foreign policy should be handled in Central America? Does that mean some members were arguing for one, some for another, or would you just sit in your solitary splendor and decide what went on?

A: Well, it certainly involved some of that. One always has to consider, in talking about being chairman of a department, the power in terms of the total administration of the university, the power that rests in the members of a department and the individuals above the department - administrative officers and individuals above the department that have to participate in the final decision. That was certainly true through most of my chairmanship in the department. The university operated under a very autocratic president, President Cloyd Heck Marvin. I don't know how I would describe the Deans under whom I operated, there were several, so a generalization probably can't be made. But, I think the manner of operating was that when there were these disagreements in the department, then the higher administrative offices over me took it upon themselves to think, "Well, it's our prerogative to make a decision in this case". I had a feeling in the arguments, especially with respect to the educational aspect of applied work in the department of psychology that the administration sided with the people in the Education Department. The educational people wanted to take it over to enhance their Department and some in the Psychology Department thought that was a good idea. They didn't want it. It's such a complicated problem, it's very difficult to summarize all that took place in a few words.

Q: But it's interesting to see that there were divisions and a good reason for it, each one of them.

A: Yes. The arguments went on with good reasons on both sides.

Q: Then you had outside pressures outside of your own department. Don't you?

A: Right, that's true. There's no doubt about that.

Q: Well, now, all during this period, you wrote quite a number of articles, I believe. What were your interests? What were you investigating and studying that you published?

A: In terms of my publications, back in the 1930's, I published a textbook in psychological testing. That was an academic kind of publication that reflected my interests in the field of psychological testing, generally rather than particularly to the applied areas which I discussed. The other book which I published was co-authored by me and Dr. Moss, who was then still in the department. It was a textbook in

abnormal psychology, a basic textbook for undergraduate courses. That also reflected a special interest of mine in the general field of psychology. Abnormal psychology was one of my major teaching areas.

Q: Did that fall more into the

A: More into the mental health field. I think in relation to the book abnormal psychology should be distinguished from clinical psychology. Clinical psychology is a term that has come to be used to refer to the applied field of psychology in which psychology is applied to mental health problems. Abnormal psychology is a scientific, theoretical study of the basic facts and principles that relate to abnormal behavior, which, of course, is very closely tied in to clinical psychology as an applied field. Abnormal psychology has been a field of psychology almost from the beginning of psychology in universities, which was the latter part of the 1890's. Clinical psychology is a field of activity that came in with the development of the applied fields, mainly after World War II. Now, I've had other publications - my publications have been in a variety of fields. As I've already indicated, I did psychological studies with Dr. Walter Freeman and with you, Dr. James Watts. I did studies on the first 40 lobotomies - prefrontal lobotomies that were done here in the United States and in connection with that I wrote two chapters in the book on psychosurgery, mainly authored by Dr. Freeman and Dr. Watts. Recently I've written quite a number of things that have to do with more personnel oriented fields, that is, things that have to do with the more technical aspects of psychometric work applied to selection, promotional, and management problems in employment work.

Q: Would that be primarily what would now be called industrial psychology?

A: Yes, industrial. Now, actually the psychology department at the present time, and they sort of had to almost come around in a circle, except they've left these purely applied personnel things, still left them off, but the psychology department now, under the direction of Professor James Mosel, who is presently in the department, has a strong program in what is called "Industrial Organizational Psychology. This is a program that is a very scientifically oriented program, not just a purely applied emphasis. It is a scientifically oriented program on how to deal with all sorts of industrial and organizational problems connected with industry and the employment activities generally.

Q: Now, do we turn to what you are doing now, or we may have skipped something in there that you'd like to bring out now?

A: Well, at the moment, I don't think of anything we've skipped particularly. We've probably touched on most of the things I would think of. But if you want me to talk a little bit about what I'm doing now, I'd be glad to.

Q: Yes, what you're doing now.

A: Giving a picture of what I'm doing now, sort of leads back to my retirement as a full time professor. If I recall the year correctly, in 1969 I retired as a full time professor. Now, of course, before I retired, as I think I've already indicated in my discussion, I did do "consulting work on the side", besides my full time university job. Theoretically, I was supposed, according to the university rules, to devote not more than the equivalent of one day a week to outside work. Well, nobody knows how much time in the evening, how much time on weekends you spend on one thing or another. But anyway, I did put in a considerable amount of activity on the side while I was still teaching.

Q: You were teaching full time and the outside stuff you were doing on your own.

A: The outside consulting work was done from my office at the university until 1948, which I'll come back to in a minute. Whatever I did was just done out of my university office and it was done on a consulting basis. I'll just give you an example. I don't remember the year, but the example I'll mention was done before I opened an office in the Columbia Medical Building. One year, with the assistance of Dr. Tuthill in the psychology department, I did an employment survey of the employee attitudes for the Woodward and Lothrop Department Store. Woodward and Lothrop's Department Store didn't have quite the extensiveness it has now. I think they had their downtown store and maybe one branch store on Connecticut Avenue, I think that was all they had at that time, but there were a large number of employees. Well, that's an example of a consulting job that I was in charge of and, as I said, my teaching colleague helped out on that. There were others, but that is a good example. In 1948, since I was carrying on some consulting activity and at that time my husband, who had been working in the War Department in a personnel job, wanted to leave the government, we decided that together we would rent space in the Columbia Medical

Building, I was a primary renter, because at that time they wouldn't rent an office in the Columbia Medical Building unless you had an M.D. or a dental degree. So we started a consulting office there and all my outside activity, except that which was very directly connected with the university, was done there.

Q: What was your husband's profession?

A: Well, his background was in the personnel field. Actually, he had a degree in Counseling Education, a Master's Degree, from George Washington University, but his activities were primarily in the field of personnel. That was the type of job that he had in the government. With the office in the Columbia Medical Building opened and cooperation from my husband, the consulting activity increased. My husband died in 1966. After that, I continued on with part time in the office until I retired from full time University teaching in 1969. From that time on, I've carried on what I'd considered a full time consulting activity because once I retired from the university, I was not under the restriction of devoting limited time to consulting. I have continued, as I think I may have mentioned before, to teach occasional classes. Ever since I retired, I've taught one class in the summer and one class in the fall. I decided I would not do all three terms, so I have not taught in the spring term. In 1975, I was joined full-time in my activities in the Columbia Medical Building by a colleague of mine, who is still with me in the private consulting work. This colleague of mine is Clyde J. Lindley. He had worked with me on some consulting jobs before 1975. Clyde, I have known since 1946 when he joined the university as a part time instructor in the evening in the psychology department. So, I had known him over those years. His full time job was with the Veteran's Administration and when he joined me in 1975, he was retiring as the Executive Director in the Office of Mental Health and Behavioral Sciences under the Department of Medicine and Surgery in the Veteran's Administration. He can be identified as working in what would be called the mental health field. He was in the Department of Medicine and Surgery, but as a psychologist.

Q: Does he have a Ph.D?

A: No, he does not have a Ph.D, but he is licensed as a full-fledged psychologist in the District of Columbia and in the state of Maryland. He has been working with me in the consulting office since 1975 and still is working in the office. The office moved from the Columbia

Medical Building when it was torn down to build the International Square Building. We moved to an office on 18th Street, and lo and behold, in two years it was torn down to build what I call a glass box office building and I'm now in a consulting office at 15th and K Street in the old Investment Building. To indicate what I do, I'll say "we" now, since most of the activities there go on between the two of us (Clyde Lindley and me) or with cooperation between us. What we do, mainly, I suppose one would say, are three things, first, diagnostic psychological studies. These are diagnoses of individuals who are referred to us by outside people or agencies. They may be referred to us by pediatricians, who are trying to handle the problems of a parent who can't control a child, or other child-parent problems. The referrals are usually with the question: "What's wrong with the child?. We look into wrong with the parent too.

Q: I have a friend - many years ago - his wife had severe headaches. We knew them real well and this went on and on. And he took his wife to Johns Hopkins for examination and it must have been to the diagnostic clinic, because they ended up with the psychiatric examination and he found out there wasn't anything wrong with his wife, they said everything was wrong with him! So, he didn't think that turned out to be such a good visit.

A: It's funny when you begin to do individual diagnoses of problems, it seldom turns out that the problem solely centers in the person who comes to you for a consultation.

Q: One other comment. In the days when Dr. Freeman and I had so many people consulting us about the lobotomy, I said facetiously, when the patient comes in, often there are three or four members of the family with him and I didn't operate on the one who was craziest, I operated on the one who was disabled!

A: I'm sure that would be true.

Q: So you're doing diagnostic/psychological studies now.

A: That's one of the things we do. This work is not limited to children. We see persons of all ages. We also do a certain amount of research and writing. I might say, when you asked me about publications a few minutes ago, I almost forgot the most recent one. A publication that just came out this year, 1984, is a publication published by the

Wiley Company, a prime publisher of scientific types of books, as I understand. They have published a four volume Encyclopedia of Psychology which contains about 1200 items. I suppose we could say it, in psychology, corresponds a little bit to the Encyclopedia Britannica to the world in general. But that's the sort of book it is. And I served as an associate editor of the publication. As such, I read and expressed an opinion on the sections of the book that were referred to me by the chief editor, Dr. Corsini. I also wrote a section in the Encyclopedia publication on psychological tests. I think the title of my section is, "Psychological Tests, What are their Survival Problems?"

Q: It's interesting, as I listen to you discuss what you're doing, that the testing, your interest in testing, has been maintained over a period of forty years or more.

A: Yes, it's been maintained over a long period of time. I guess it's the most predominant interest, if you put down all the things you might call "fields of psychology" that's the most predominant field of interest; certainly, it's the longest maintained. Now, what other things do we do? I'll say what "we" do, since I work with my colleague at the office. The last few years we have done a considerable amount of contract work mostly in the public sector, relating to personnel problems in the jurisdiction (state, county, or city). I'll just give you a couple of examples. We've done several contract jobs that have to do with police and fire department problems. We're, at the current time, involved in contract work with Marion County, Indiana, which is a county that surrounds Indianapolis. We're working with the sheriff's department in Marion County, in which we're assisting them in the development of selection procedures for sheriffs, promotion procedures for whatever their next level is, procedures that can be used in doing performance evaluation, and training of their supervisors for doing the performance evaluation. We also have an ongoing contract with the city of Bridgeport, Connecticut, in which we have done a number of different jobs in the personnel field. Sometime ago, we had a contract with the Nuclear Regulatory Agency, in which the primary thing that we did was to survey the literature on the possible use of psychological evaluating devices for detection of potential saboteurs. We made recommendations, but were not hired for a project that would carry out our recommendations. We were contracted to do the survey of the psychological literature that relates to the problem, which we did for them. The projects I have mentioned will serve as examples of the contract types of jobs.

Q: I don't remember whether we were talking about that on tape, or whether it was at lunch, but you were talking about the great variety of things that you have done and are able to do - what an advantage that gives you over the individual who knows how to do only one thing. I think we were thinking particularly of people in certain restricted types of labor or even office work.

Interview with Dr. Thelma Hunt
Begin tape 3, Side 2

Q: You were going to say something else?

A: Well, you had asked me a question about being able to do a variety of things. I have been able to do a variety of things; they're all tied together, in a sense, with my professional background. Not so much at the present time but I have been able to do administrative work and did for a considerable period of time when I was Chairman of the Psychology Department. I don't know whether to say I like administrative work or not, I don't think it's one of my favorite ones, but I enjoy it because it gives you in the organization in which you're doing administrative work broader contacts with larger numbers of persons than if you were in most other types of work. So, I would say I've enjoyed it. As all of you who will be listening or reading, probably realize it's had it's headaches. I've enjoyed teaching, I guess it's been one of my favorite activities. I enjoy research, although I have not been a terribly productive research person, I think mainly because I've been in too many things in other directions. I like writing. When I say I like writing, maybe I should have produced more in the way of books and articles. But article production does relate to research and requires time for that also. Yes, I have enjoyed a number of different kinds of activities and I think this has enhanced my ability to utilize my background and training in some of these different ways that I have talked about.

Q: One thing often comes up - of all things, what has given you the most satisfaction?

A: I suppose among the activities in which I've engaged, I suppose teaching I would put first in terms of satisfaction gained from it. However, it's hard to answer that question definitively.

Q: Let me ask you this. I've enjoyed teaching also and I've had the privilege and responsibility of having residents stay with me three or

four years. Now I know what some of them are doing. How about your Ph.D. students? Have you been able to follow them and know what they are doing and what fields of endeavor they've gotten into and what you might say they are accomplishing, as far as being in other educational departments or other fields of endeavor?

A: I certainly couldn't answer that question by any extensive study of the post-graduate student activities of my students, but I do know of a number of them and will mention some of them as good examples. And I might also say that considering the length of time that I taught (still am at it, as a matter of fact) at George Washington University, I once thought, "Well, I'll just try and figure out how many students I've had in my teaching career". I don't know what figure I came up with, but, anyway, if you consider when I was still teaching full time, I might have 200 students a semester in various of my classes. Back in the veteran days, I had some general psychology classes in lecture sections of 300 students. So, I've had thousands of students if you add them all up. Now, of course, I can't keep track of all them, but they recognize me very often when I don't recognize them. And I'll tell you a little story about a student recognizing me when I didn't recognize him. This happened (I suppose it has been four or five years ago). I have a friend who lives in New York City that I occasionally go visit and the best way for me to go visit this friend, who lives at the edge of Greenwich Village at 7th Avenue and 14th Street and the best way to go visit this friend is to go up on the railroad and get off and take the subway. So I had to walk from where I got off the Pennsylvania Railroad to the 7th Avenue subway, and go one stop. I was walking this long underground walk from where I got off the train to where I could get on the subway. I had a little suitcase, not a big bag or I would not have attempted this walk. But, anyway, I was walking along and all of a sudden I became aware of the fact that there was a young fellow very close on my heels behind me and I thought, "Well, this is something to watch out for". I sort of glanced and it wasn't anybody that I recognized at all. Finally came this voice, "Dr. Hunt, would you like for me to carry your bag where you're going?"

Q: That's a nice story.

A: So I got a little help with my small bag when I got to the subway station.

Q: That wasn't the one you were paying a visit to?

A: No, it was just somebody that was walking, who probably got off the same train. So, I've had a few episodes like that. But to come back to students of mine, I hate to just pick out one or two because I'm sure there are others I could have picked out. One very prominent student of mine is Dr. Hans Strupp. He has been, for several years, the head of the Clinical Psychological Ph.D. program at Vanderbilt University. He's a George Washington Ph.D. Another is Betty Trump Conover, she was Betty Trump when she got her degree here. She has a master's degree in psychology from George Washington University and was one of my students. She has now retired after becoming a Professor of Psychology in Miami Dade College in Florida. She had an academic career in the Miami Dade area. Another one that could be mentioned is Dr. Eva Johnson, who was on the Psychology Department staff here for a number of years and is now retired. She was a Ph.D. student of mine. Another former Ph.D. student of mine is Elizabeth Stirling. She's the daughter of Dr. Stirling, who was a practicing physician here in the city for a number of years.

Q: I knew Dr. Stirling.

A: You did?

Q: Yes.

A: Well, she's his daughter and I was her major professor. She has been very successful in a private psychological practice in the city of Washington. This may be premature because I don't think it's finalized yet, but she is being recommended to be on the Psychology Examining Board for the examining of people who will be granted licenses as psychologists here in the District of Columbia. She's made out extremely well and - not in an academic field, but in a private practice field. Well, I might mention one or two others. I'll mention David Silberman. He was, before his death not too long ago, the Executive Director of the D.C. Association for Retarded Citizens, which is the largest operating organization outside of purely government operated ones for retarded in the District of Columbia. As an interesting fact about him, I might say, he was one of our older Ph.D. students. I think Elizabeth Stirling, whom I just mentioned, was the youngest Ph.D. that ever graduated under me and she graduated, I think, at the age of 24. He was the oldest, and he graduated just short of being 65. The reason he was so old at the time he got his degree was that he chose psychology as a second career after retiring from being a partner in a very successful fur business. He was connected with the Jandel Fur Company -

now the Saks-Jandel Company. You may hear them over the radio, they advertise extensively. He was very successful in business and then he came to George Washington and was an outstanding Ph.D. student in psychology. Among other of my students I'll mention Allan Stubbs. You may know Allan Stubbs' father, Dr. Donald Stubbs. Allan Stubbs was one of our Ph.D. students. He went into an academic career at the University of Maine and I think he is still there, probably now the Chairman of their department. He was one of our Ph.D. students. I would emphasize that they're examples, there are others just as deserving of mention. I hope one does not raise the question: "Why did you fail to mention me"?

Q: Do you think anything that we've left out that you might like to put in or would you like to say anything in conclusion?

A: I think I've said enough already. Somebody's going to think I'm egotistical if I say more.

Q: To me, when I start on anything like this, I wonder whether it's going to be difficult or how much work is going to be involved in it. I find in interviewing you it's almost no work; it's been fun listening to you. I've learned a lot about what you've been doing. There is one thing I might like to ask you. Didn't your path cross with Donald Stubbs at some point?

A: Yes. I just mentioned one of his sons as being a psychology Ph.D. First of all, Donald was involved in some of the early Scholastic Aptitude Test studies for medical schools in doing some of the test construction and statistical work. He was also an experimental subject taking the first form of the Scholastic Aptitude Test for Medical Schools when it was tried out at the George Washington University Medical School. He was in the 1932 graduating class - the members of which took the test in the fall of 1928.

Q: He had a Ph.D. before -

A: No, he had a Master's Degree.

Q: Was it in psychology?

A: Yes, he got a Master's Degree in psychology under Dr. Moss and he taught as a graduate assistant in the psychology department at one stage

of his life. . I can't remember whether that was when he was in medical school or after but, anyway, he did teach in the psychology department - I think some introductory courses in abnormal psychology, maybe a physiological psychology course. But he was involved in some of the early days and work in the psychology department.

Q: Well, if you have nothing else to add, I want to thank you for the Oral History Committee for doing this and I think it's going to be most interesting. It tells us a lot about George Washington that would be lost in just looking over minutes of meetings.

A: Minutes don't always reflect a lot of things, sometimes they are incomplete. I've certainly enjoyed it very much and look forward to listening to what I've said.

Q: Yes. Well, thank you very much.

A: You're certainly welcome.
(end of interview)

